MIND OVER BODY

LETTERS TO A FRIEND A CHRISTIAN SCIENTIST

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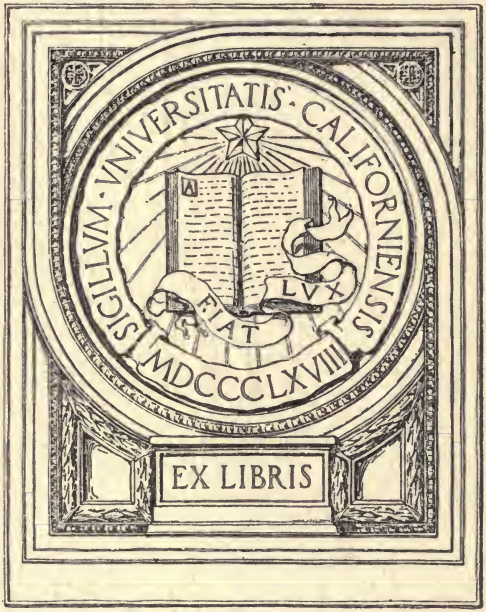

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MIND OVER BODY

LETTERS TO A FRIEND — A CHRISTIAN SCIENTIST

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NOTE

THE writer of these letters — originally written to a friend, as the title indicates — refrains for two reasons from attaching his name to them.

The first reason will readily be appreciated by such readers of the letters as are in the habit of doing their own thinking. It is that the majority of readers magnify or minimize the value of an argument, or statement, according as they estimate the importance of the writer.

The second reason is that the writer feels that he has merely put together ideas of others, none of them new; and therefore that he has no claim to authorship. So he merely subscribes himself as

EDITOR.

The great historic problem — the problem alike of our earliest religions and our latest philosophic culture — has been to reconcile Nature and man, to fuse flesh and spirit, to wed force and freedom, to harmonize law and gospel, to marry mechanism and morals ; in short, permanently to unite the indefinitely great, which is the superb overbearing cosmos, with the indefinitely small, which is our humble domestic earth, the pleasant house of our abode, that whatsoever is most outward or public and profane in existence may find itself authenticated by that which is most inward or private and sacred ; that so whatsoever is most absolute or material and therefore domineering and cruel in experience, may become sanctified by association with whatsoever is most contingent, most moral or free, and therefore most gracious, pliable, and orderly.

— *Henry James (the senior).*

MIND OVER BODY:

LETTERS TO A FRIEND — A CHRISTIAN SCIENTIST

I

"We have naught to fear from ultimate knowledge if we but conquer all false shame, and quarry deep enough."
—*Richard Wagner.*

DENVER, Colo.,———

Dear Friend ———:

Your frequent letters to me during the past two years, urging with great persistency that I become a Christian Scientist, and setting forth your reasons why I should do so, were carefully and thoughtfully read, each at the time it was received. That I have not replied to them is no doubt inexplicable to you, in view of the warm friendship of our boyhood days, which, I sincerely hope and believe, still exists, notwithstanding that our diverging paths in life have latterly put be-

tween us the width of a continent. Why I so persistently refrained from entering into a controversy with you, I shall explain in my next letter.

Much in Mrs. Eddy's book, *Science and Health*, appeals to me; there is a spiritual uplift to parts of it that are not so mystical as to be incomprehensible to the reader. I agree with many of Mrs. Eddy's postulates — though some of the positions that, with her, are assumptions, I reach as conclusions. Much good is resulting from Christian Science having entered the fields of religion, philosophy, and therapeutics.

Because of these circumstances I regret the unsympathetic criticisms — generally unintelligent and too often acrimonious — that are being made upon Mrs. Eddy and Christian Science by members of the clergy and by various magazines and newspapers. These attacks — for the most part *irrelevant to the philosophy* of Christian Science — cannot but result, on the one hand, in preventing unthinking antagonists from discovering such

good as is to be found in the philosophy; and, on the other hand, in a tendency to close the minds of its devotees to any analytical examination.

While the arguments — or assertions — pro and con, as to the authorship of the book, *Science and Health*, may be interesting from an historical point of view, they cannot determine the value of the contents of the book itself. Similarly, Shakespeare's dramas will stand or fall regardless of whether written by Shakespeare or by Bacon. The sublime beauty of the Beatitudes does not depend upon the authenticity of the authorship ascribed to the Gospels that contain them, nor even upon the question as to who uttered them.

There are those who cite the "fouling" of the manna in the possession of those Israelites who accumulated it in the wilderness, as symbolical of the torments that have come to Mrs. Eddy because of her material possessions. This has nothing to do with the truth or falsity of Christian Science.

Professedly with the purpose of making the Christian Science church services impersonal, all sermonizing is prohibited, and the book, *Science and Health*, is made the pastor. There are those who claim that this intention is nullified by the introduction of the personality of Mrs. Eddy into the services, her name being announced each Sunday as the author of *Science and Health;* and by the further fact that once each month the authorship of one of the songs, sung that day, is ascribed to her. This is another criticism that has nothing to do with the intellectual aspect of the philosophy.

The controversies as to which of the two injunctions of Christ should prevail, "The laborer is worthy of his hire," as a justification for the acceptance of fees and salaries, for the prices charged for Christian Science books, lectures, etc.; and, "Freely ye have received, freely give," as a basis for condemnation of alleged commercialism, — these controversies have no bearing on the rationality of the philosophy.

On the other hand, I am not influenced by the array of dukes, earls, judges, prominent business and professional men, and others, whose names and titles are, because of their eminence, being exploited by Christian Science writers of magazine articles for their psychological effect on readers whom such names influence. Many there are who "to the fascination of a name surrender judgment hoodwinked."

Nor do the letters in the Christian Science periodicals, fulsomely adulatory of Mrs. Eddy, have weight with me.

I deprecate, as irrelevant, all these things that I have mentioned. None of them touches the philosophy of Christian Science. None of them has any interest for me; except, perhaps, as it indicates states of mind of individuals.

And here I wish to indulge in a little retrospection. The atmosphere of the home of your youth and of mine was identical. We both were urged by our parents to maintain an analytical state of mind; to

refuse to accept a conclusion in any line of thought — *excepting that of theology* — without first sifting and examining for ourselves the premises, and the process of reasoning by which it was reached. But our religious views were given to us as conclusive; they were not to be questioned. They were not held by us as convictions; though this we did not know, for we gave no thought to the matter. We had tacitly accepted as true, doctrines that had been taught us from childhood by those in whom we had implicit confidence as competent to judge those matters for us. Our religious education as children and as young people differed in degree only, not in kind, from that of the Jesuit as described by Prof. G. Lowes Dickinson, in one of his essays, as follows: —

"The training of a Jesuit as prescribed in the famous Institutes was based upon a process which a modern man of science might describe as *self-hypnotization.* By intense and solitary meditation, accompanied by physical exercises, by fastings, flagellations, postures, groanings, weepings, he forced himself, so

far as possible, to re-enact in his own person the Passion of Christ, to ascend with Him to Heaven, to taste, in anticipation, the joys of His Kingdom, and to share the tortures of the damned in hell. Not the imagination only, and the intelligence, but almost the very physical senses, were compelled to co-operate in this deliberate hallucination. He must not only think and conceive; he must hear, see, touch, and taste. The whole personality, intellectual, moral — one might almost say physical — was run in this way into a final mold. That it should take that shape, uncritically, passively, not of conviction but of force, was the essence of the whole process. But once that was achieved, development was permitted and encouraged along the lines thus rigidly prescribed. The mind henceforth was the tool of unquestioning faith. It might calculate but it must not reason; it might devise means but it must not consider ends. Every accomplishment the Jesuit may and should acquire; he should be a linguist, a mathematician, a man of science, perhaps — above all, a man of the world, accomplished, polite, persuasive, plausible, up to date in his knowledge, his methods, his arts; he may be anything and everything, so long as he obeys and does not think. He may study history as much as he likes, but it must be history as interpreted by the Church; he may study Latin and Greek, provided that he remain insensible

to the classical spirit; he may study science, so long as he does not permit it to react upon theology. Nay, all these things he *ought* to study, in order that he may meet the enemy on his own ground. Only that the enemy is the enemy, that the truth is the truth, that the Church is the Church, and that his whole duty is to subordinate to the interest of his Order all his powers, spiritual, moral, and physical — this is the never forgotten command of his hypnotic dream, of the fixed idea branded upon him at the outset of his career by the deliberately non-rational discipline to which he has been subjected. Once for all he has been cured of the possibility of asking, 'Why?' His reason has been killed? No! It has been chained to the car of Faith, and in the car rides theology triumphant, surrounded by the saints of the Order, and crushing under the wheels the heretic, the speculator, and the unbeliever."

This is an extreme illustration; but it differs, as I have said, only in degree — not in kind — from your own experience and mine. It goes to show, as Professor Dickinson continues, that

"It is the object of an ecclesiastical system not merely to create an atmosphere, but to paralyze beforehand the agency by which

that atmosphere might be disturbed; with the result, no doubt, of encouraging stability, but only at the cost of arresting growth."

Many of the idols of our earlier years you and I have shattered, only to take to ourselves new ones. For instance, you have repudiated the orthodox interpretation of the meaning of the birth and death of Christ. So have I, though the interpretation I now hold differs from that which you now believe to be true. But, as young people, we believed the doctrines of the immaculate conception and the vicarious atonement to be truth.

We — you and I — say we have progressed. The real fact is that we have changed our minds, and "Who saw false once, again may falsely see." Do you see falsely now, or is it I? You cannot decide fairly without knowing my point of view. And you have forced me to give it to you.

But, you say you are sure you have the truth now, because — as you say — the truth of your philosophy is proven by its "demon-

stration." And this brings me to the real matter of this, my first letter; and that is, to ask that you consent to some "rules of procedure"; that you agree to separately consider each division of my argument. In other words, I urge that you keep in force that habit of thought — so marked in you in our school-days — of insisting that first steps shall come first; that no attempts be made to reach conclusions until primary and intermediate phases be analyzed. Applied to this subject, this means that — as I have before urged — you weigh separately each part of my argument. If you would understand me at all, you must agree to go with me into an examination of two separate phases of this matter; — first, the religious and cosmic philosophy of Christian Science; secondly, the relation of these to its system of therapeutics, and to the "demonstration" claimed for the latter, by which — you maintain — the former is proven to be true.

If you will not so consider it, it is useless for me to go further. But, as Professor

Dickinson says in the series of essays from which I have quoted — the same being not a criticism of religion, but of dogmatic theology:

"I hardly believe that it will be those who have the finest sense of religion that will resent my candor. Rather, it is precisely they who will be most willing to investigate the ground and nature of their belief, and who will repudiate the application, to this momentous question, of a method of hushing up and slurring over which they would deprecate in any of the ordinary business of life."

And again he says:

"It is a poor religion that needs to rest upon . . . the deliberate refusal to face what we know of truth; that takes refuge . . . from a truth which it fears may be fatal to itself."

It is well, also, to keep in mind the thought expressed by Emerson:

"The life of man is a self-evolving circle, which, from a ring imperceptibly small, rushes on all sides outwards to new and larger circles, and that without end. The extent to which this generation of circles, wheel without wheel, will go, depends on the force or truth of the

soul. For it is the inert effort of each thought, having formed itself into a circular wave of circumstance — as for instance, an empire, rules of an art, a local usage, a religious rite — to heap itself on that ridge and to solidify and hem in the life. But if the soul is quick and strong, it bursts over that boundary on all sides and expands another orbit on the great deep, which also runs up into a high wave with attempt again to stop and to bind. But the strong soul refuses to be imprisoned; in its first and narrowest pulses it already tends outward with a vast force and to immense and innumerable expansions."

II

"Day has ever to dethrone the night anew."
— *Richard Wagner.*

DENVER, Colo., ———

Dear Friend:

Although our relations have been less intimate since the separation of our paths five years ago — yours for college, mine for the great West — the occasional visits that I have had from our old friend and schoolmate, ———, have kept me in touch with you; so that I have known of your religious transition from orthodoxy to agnosticism, and of the mental pain you endured when first you broke the chains of your early ecclesiastical education. My own experience has been similar.

When your letters began to pour in upon me, I almost yielded to your arguments; partly because of my notion of your mental superiority — conscious as I was of the advantages of your college education, which I had been denied; — partly because of my own

unpreparedness. But it was probably the latter that chiefly caused me to hesitate.

I had read *Science and Health.* But, while you, because of your earlier familiarity with philosophy and metaphysical lines of thought, may easily have understood it, to me it was so "stubbornly expansive and elusive" — (this expression I found in a review of Professor Henry James' recent book, *Pragmatism,* and I liked it) — that I concluded that it was beyond my comprehension; and I think that the vast majority of Christian Science devotees have this same experience. Many "believe, because they cannot understand"; many "believe in order that they may understand." Is it not so?

Another reason for my tardiness in writing to you was the inevitable unwillingness one has to disturb in a friend, even were one able, a state of mind that seems to result for him in spiritual content. And, because of this latter reason, I doubt if I should, even now, break my silence, but for the fact that it has reached me indirectly that you have said

that I am a coward, and dishonest; meaning, of course, that you are satisfied that your letters to me, and my re-reading of Mrs. Eddy's *Science and Health* (which re-reading I promised you) have resulted in my conviction that Christian Science is the truth, but that I lack the courage to acknowledge the fact of my conviction.

Knowing this manifestation of proselyting zeal on your part to be a violation of the spirit of your philosophy, and recognizing the hurt that I experienced, because of your charge, to be an injury to my self-love; I should still have refrained from replying, but that the self-complacency you manifest is but too frequently exhibited by converts to any new idea. I wish to make — by my act of writing to you — a protest against intolerance.

I commend to your attention an utterance of Mrs. Eddy's in *The Independent* (Nov. 22, 1906): —

I love the prosperity of Zion, be it promoted by Catholic, by Protestant, or by Christian

Scientist. . . I would no more quarrel with a man because of his religion, than I would because of his art. . . . It is of comparatively little importance what a man thinks or believes he knows; the good that a man does is the one thing needful, and the sole proof of his rightness.

But, as this is likely to be interpreted by the Christian Science devotee to suit himself, I like still better — because capable of but one construction — the equally tolerant utterance of the president of a literary society in one of our large cities, himself a Christian Scientist, in introducing four men who were to read papers on religion from different points of view: —

"Except in cases where self-interest disturbs the equilibrium of a man's judgment, it is hard to understand how one of ordinary intelligence can express himself intolerantly of the religious beliefs of another when these are honestly held and uprightly lived.

"If I condemn you for such beliefs, I say to you practically this: 'Your mental and moral developments are very immature as compared with mine; your intelligence is less than mine; your capacity smaller; your fiber coarser; and your aims lower. It is your evident and un-

questionable duty to recognize my superior judgment regarding your ideals and associations.'"

Because of phenomena that follow the application of the Christian Science therapeutic formula, you insist that these prove the truth of your philosophy. But the *post hoc, ergo propter hoc* argument is one of the most dangerous fallacies known to logic, and one that you will not permit for a moment in the consideration of any philosophy but Christian Science, or of any system of therapeutics but your own.

A retrospect of any one's life will bring to memory idol after idol which one has built to one's self, most of which one has seen broken because based upon untenable foundations or carried to illogical superstructures.

In our earliest childhood we unquestioningly accept as true — because of reliance upon the statement of those in whom our confidence is placed — the story of the reality of Santa Claus. And our faith in the truth of the story is but confirmed by the corrobo-

rating evidence of the "gifts" we discover on Christmas morning. As with the dispelling of delusions of our after life, the shattering of this idol of infancy is a shock. But, for the time, the belief in the reality of Santa Claus was, for us, truth.

So with the belief in the doctrine of the vicarious atonement of Christ, which I mentioned in my first letter. A man who has sunk to the lowest depths of degradation happens upon a band of the Salvation Army, and listens for a while to their talk about "Christ dying that he might take upon himself our sins; that to believe thus is to be cleansed from sin and to be born anew, and so forth." So impressed is he that there comes over him a feeling of happiness and peace unknown to him before. Thus is demonstrated the truth of the theory of a vicarious atonement for sin; and for him henceforth, as for all others who believe thus, this is truth.

But the Christian Scientist, rejecting this interpretation of the purpose and conse-

quence of the death of Christ — as do thousands of others now — says to the theologian, "the demonstration which you claim to be because of your philosophy, and to be the proof of its truth, requires — for me at least — some other explanation. Your philosophy must stand on its merits; its truth is not proven — for me — by the alleged demonstration. My cure for sin is the denial of the reality of evil."

And, as with sin, similarly with sickness. An Indian is sick and calls upon the "medicine-man" of the tribe for relief. The latter responds with incantations and beating of tomtoms. Should the patient recover, the Indians' traditional philosophy is sustained; namely, that through inherent value in noise and unintelligible incantations, the Great Spirit has exorcised the evil spirit that had possessed the patient. And, for them, this is truth.

As to results that have followed the application of theories of the mental scientist, the faith healer, the hypnotist, the mesmer-

ist, the Indian medicine-man; that have accompanied pilgrimages to Holy Hills, to holy wells, shrines, relics, etc., etc., the Christian Scientist will deny that in them is proof of the soundness of any proposed theory. But he will not permit a similar liberty as to *his* philosophy and the phenomena that follow its application.

But, from the fact that similar results do follow preceding events — the latter in themselves apparently dissimilar — am I not justified in insisting that you consider separately your philosophy and its relation to the phenomena that are connected with it; and that if the former be found to be unsound — or if it even develop that there is valid ground for difference of opinion — you entertain a proffered explanation of the latter, even should it differ from your own?

For me, the achievement of physical healing, through mental instrumentalities, demonstrates, not any of the special explanations that have been advanced, but merely "the *presence of a power adequate to the effect.*"

III

"There shall never be one lost Good!
What was, shall live as before."
—*Browning.*

DENVER, Colo., ———

My dear ———*:*

That most beautiful character, the bishop, in *Les Miserables*, is described by Hugo as follows: —

"*Love one another:* he declared that to be complete; he desired nothing more, and it was his whole doctrine. When one day it was said to him, 'Your "love one another" is a stupidity,' he replied without discussion, 'if it be a stupidity, the soul ought to shut itself up in it, like the pearl in an oyster.' And he shut himself up in it, he lived in it, he was satisfied absolutely with it; laying aside the mysterious questions which attract and which dishearten; the unfathomable depths of abstraction, the precipices of metaphysics — all those profundities, to the apostle converging upon God, to the atheist upon annihilation; destiny, good and evil, the war of being against being, the conscience of man, the thought-like dreams of the animal, the transformation of death, the recapitulation of exist-

ences contained in the tomb, the incomprehensible engrafting of successive affections on the enduring *me;* the essence, the substance, the nothing, and the something, the soul, nature, liberty, necessity; difficult problems, sinister depths, toward which are drawn the gigantic archangels of the human race."

I feel that, as Emerson says: —

"No man need be perplexed in his speculations. Let him do and say what strictly belongs to him, and though very ignorant of books, his nature shall not yield him any intellectual obstructions and doubt. Our young people are diseased with the theological problems of original sin, origin of evil, predestination, the character of the universe, and the like. These never presented a practical difficulty to any man — never darkened any man's road who did not go out of his way to seek them. These are the soul's mumps and measles and whooping-cough, and those who have not caught them cannot describe their health or prescribe their cure. A simple mind will not know these enemies."

I believe in the absolute and universal dominion of Good. You say that you, also, do. Why then not act as though we so believe, and not make it a mere statement of the lips, to be contradicted by our actions, or

confused in our thought by questions comparatively inconsequential, such as the non-existence of evil, the character of the "transition, called death" (Mrs. Eddy's *Unity of Good*, p. 3), the nature of the phenomenal universe, and so forth?

Do not reiterated and well-nigh interminable disquisitions as to evil, its origin, its reality, the responsibility for it, serve but to divert our minds from, and tend to obscure, the greater question, the reign of Good? Indeed, do they not tend to engender a morbid interest in evil, as advertisements of patent medicines tend to produce disease? Do subtle attempts to discriminate between a theological "devil" — (as a positive force for evil) — and "mortal mind" — (which is said not to be, and therefore a negation) — have such a practical value in our daily lives that we must give to them so much thought? If I have to decide for myself as to an action, I have no alternative; one way is right, the other way is not right. This latter negation will, for my purpose, be

more effective than to put it into the positive form of a declaration, "Evil is unreal." If one has sinned, the *impulse* which will lead him to seek a prevention of the recurrence of the sinful act, is the only really important factor. The *form* into which his habit of thought shapes this impulse — whether of prayer, or the denial of the reality of evil, or an earnest resolution, or penances — is of very little consequence comparatively. The impulse, God-implanted, is spiritual, and in itself opens possibilities for the regenerating influence of the spiritual forces.

And, similarly — for me — as to "matter," so-called; it is enough to believe that though "man can never know what it is, in itself" — any more than he can know what mind is — "this need not deter him from making it a feature of his philosophy, if he go no further in his ideas of the nature of this appearance of substance in the objects about him than is involved in the office they fill in his experience."

With Browning, —

"My own hope is, a sun will pierce
The thickest cloud earth ever stretched;
That after Last, returns the First,
Though a wide compass round be fetched;
That what began best, can't end worst,
Nor what God blessed once, prove accurst."

But all this will not satisfy you. You have "demonstrations" to be explained; demonstrations that prove — for you — that your "soul's mumps and measles and whooping-cough" are things to be retained in your soul's life. So I suppose I must, though reluctantly, put into some kind of form my notions concerning them.

IV

. . . "Finds tongues in trees, books in the running brooks, sermons in stones, and good in everything."

—*Shakespeare.*

DENVER, Colo., ———

Dear ———*:*

Notwithstanding that I believe in the absolute dominion of Good — as you say you do; notwithstanding that I believe Love to be the only constructive force in the universe — as you say you do; notwithstanding that I believe — with Mrs. Eddy — that "the only realities are Infinite Mind and its infinite manifestations"; although I believe thus — and though I repudiate the materialistic concept of physical phenomena — I am not a Christian Scientist.

Says one of the thinkers of to-day: —

"From the fact of consciousness man learns that he is alive, and hence that there is such a thing as life. From his perception of objects other than himself he receives the idea that there is something outside him which he

thinks of as being made of a substance that he denominates 'matter.'

"Of these two things — life and matter — the existence of the first is the logical necessity of the mere fact of consciousness; it is the supreme certainty of knowledge involved in the very event itself; it is the one thing man is sure of. [Mrs. Eddy declares her certainty of her own existence.] The second, this appearance of something we *call* matter, is a subject for conjecture and speculation. To this apparent something, whose very existence must ever at best be only an inference from certain features of his consciousness, man gratuitously assigns a substance, and ignores the fact that his consciousness of the object is the one and only thing about it that he can really know."

What do we really know of "matter" — so-called — even through the physical senses? Pick up a stone — what do we *know* about it? We say that it is rigid; that it has weight; that it is gray, red, or brown; and so forth. What are rigidity, weight, color? Color, the natural scientist tells us, is vibration of light; and light, heat, and electricity, he tells us, are the same thing — that is, force. Weight is an expression of gravitation — that is, force.

Rigidity is an expression of cohesion — that is, force. In short, there is no appeal the stone can make to any of the senses that we shall not discover, upon examination, to be a manifestation of force. Mrs. Eddy says rightly, "We tread on forces."

But, it will be said, force cannot exist of itself; it must come from something, and that something is "matter." We may readily agree that force cannot exist of itself, but we should require some satisfactory reason why we should credit it to matter; and this reason — since it is the natural scientist who seeks to place in matter itself the origination of force — must have some sort of "scientific" basis. Mrs. Eddy is perfectly right when she says, "mere opinion is valueless."

By eliminating from our thoughts the atomic, self-existent, self-perpetuating notion of the objective universe — and with it, once and for all, the correlated term "matter"; blotting the latter forever from our vocabulary; — and instead, always keeping in mind Mrs. Eddy's interpretation of the universe as

"God's spiritual concept," perhaps we may come to find, as Michael Angelo wrote, that

> "All the lovely things we find on earth
> Resemble, for the soul that rightly sees,
> That source of bliss divine which gave us birth,
> Nor have we first fruits or remembrance of heaven
> elsewhere."

For you, it may be satisfactory to simply affirm the physical senses and their perceptions to be products of "mortal mind" — unreal — evil; and then to refer for proof to what you call your "demonstration." But I have in mind an explanation, differing from yours, of the phenomena that follow the application of your philosophy. And, also, it is through the testimony of the physical senses, *aided by reason* — as in my consideration of the stone — that I raise the doubt as to the substantiality of the objective universe.

The differences between your conclusions and mine are, I think, because of the extreme to which Christian Scientist devotees carry their interpretation of Mrs. Eddy's "man is spiritual, he is not material." Our differences will undoubtedly be found to center

around the answer to the inquiry as to the validity of considering man as having three planes of conscious existence — spiritual, mental, physical — and without limiting God. To satisfy you, it seems necessary to rationally account for the legitimacy of the finite, while maintaining faith in the Infinite.

Mrs. Eddy affirms Infinite Mind as a postulate, and claims that the correctness of her premise, and of her logic, is proven by the "demonstration." (Remember, I intend to consider, later, the connection between the demonstration and the philosophy.)

She frequently admonishes her readers to "understand the Infinite," to "get some proper notion of the Infinite." In an attempt to examine the notion of infinity, in such wise as may be possible, let us consider "space," and by the only method of which I can conceive.

Two objects are observed, as two hills; and a certain relation which is called "distance" is perceived to exist between them. Another hill, perhaps much farther away,

maintains a similar sort of relation to the others — varying only in degree. With this much of knowledge acquired by observation (that is, by means of sensation and of ideas derived therefrom; also through perception of the mental processes necessarily involved), the imagination may carry the consideration to a still more remote point — perhaps to a star; and it appears perfectly clear that the same sort of relation still obtains, that of distance. The same thought extended to the farthermost star reveals but an extension of distance. The mind then inquires as to what is, or may be, beyond the most distant star, and can conjecture nothing but never-ending distance. This distance, extending in all directions, is called "space." Of it the mind can conceive no limit. So that the notion conveyed by the word "space" includes not only all the space of which we know, and all of which we can conceive, but also all of which we can have no conception. To the notion of its illimitability we give the word "infinite." Mrs. Eddy recommends that

we "master the infinite idea." No phase of the infinite idea can be mastered.

As with space, so with duration. The latter is, so far as this consideration is concerned, of the same nature as distance, in that it is discovered to be a relation existing between two or more things other than itself, which relation is realized by the mind from an examination of those other things. That is, one event follows — or comes after — another, and then another event follows, and yet another. From the apprehension or mental notice that we take of this sequence of events, we realize a relation we call duration. If, in imagination, we ask ourselves if there was duration before the first of all events, we cannot with certainty answer No. If, on the other hand, we look into the most distant future that is comprehensible to us, and ask ourselves if duration will continue after the last of all events, we cannot with certainty answer No. This notion of duration is called "time," and to that characteristic that shows to us our inability to assign

a beginning or an ending, we give the name "infinite," an expression of our inability to even apprehend.

The notion of time comes to man from the observation of certain results of his own intellectual processes. The notice of space comes to him from his observation of the relation of certain perceptions received through the sense of touch.

But although the notion of infinity invites, allures, entrances every imaginative soul, the attempt to "master" or to "get some proper sense of" infinity, even though it be merely on the plane of space and time, forces the intellectual powers of man back upon themselves, numbed by the effort to master problems that stagger both the understanding and the reason, and that bring the soul to humble adoration and reverent worship.

While we cannot affirm — as a matter of knowledge, nor yet of the imagination — infinite space or infinite time, we can and do admit of belief in both. This we can and do formulate; and thereby assert a belief in

a something that is wholly incomprehensible. We may, and do, know something of space and duration, but it is parts of these of which we have knowledge, and it is of still larger parts that we have comprehension; but of infinite space and of infinite time we cannot even conceive; while we do believe, and cannot avoid believing, that each is without beginning and without end. Thus we learn that it is the office of faith to carry us into realms that are beyond the reach of knowledge, or of comprehension, or even of conception. It is by faith alone that we *feel* the idea of infinity. This faith may become so strong and so satisfying as almost to justify its possessor in calling it knowledge.

Conceding that we cannot prove any substantiality to "matter," so-called; and willing to agree with Mrs. Eddy that the universe is "God's spiritual concept" and that the so-called "laws of matter" are, instead, "laws of mind"; it seems, as I have said, necessary to account rationally for the legitimacy of the finite while maintaining faith in the infinite.

Mrs. Eddy appears to consider this an impossible task. But when we remember that the notions of infinite time and of infinite space are perhaps less vague than is the notion of Infinite Mind ; and when we remember that the notion of an hour, or of a month, or of any other period of time, in no way detracts from the belief in infinite time, or eternity, and not only does not detract, but is in fact a necessary precedent of such belief; and when we remember that the belief in infinite space is in no way impaired by the recognition of bodies occupying space, but that such recognition is the condition of the notion of finite space, which is, in turn, the necessary precedent of the formation of a belief in infinite space; when we remember these facts, perhaps we at least approach the solution of the difficulty.

I hear you say, "The real man is spirit, and spirit knows not time or space, and consequently the foregoing is without value." What you say is true if one repudiates, as you do, the physical. It is true that man's

real life, his thinking, is internal; but his thought sometimes has regard for things external. His thought, in its entirety, must involve the notion of time; the external things that he must contemplate force his mind to include the notion of space. It follows that we cannot think at all, save in the conditions of the physical. Mrs. Eddy substantiates this assertion when she abruptly defines Infinite Spirit in terms of the physical, "God occupies all space."

Why does she use that expression? To be understood, you say? That's just it!—an appeal to the intellect, one of the phases of man's consciousness! Things spiritual are more easily — aye, are solely — apprehended in terms of the physical. There is no other language for them. And but for her claim of repudiation of the physical, Mrs. Eddy had not found it so "difficult to find language," as she herself says, "in which to clothe metaphysical thought." For, as Seneca says, "The language of truth is simple."

Time and space are circumstances, not of spirit, God, but of His manifestations. These appearances of things — that is, space and time, and the phenomena they contain — are incidents of the revelation of God to human consciousness. And — for me — they are a valid part of the whole.

We manifest our inability to *know* the Infinite First Cause, when, as our nearest possible approach to an expression of such knowledge, we idealize — (in the Christ, the PERFECT MAN, the highest form of creation) — the *human* qualities; and then look for, and find, on a lower scale — still incomprehensible — these qualities manifested in all physical expressions of the Creator.

V

"It is following the stars we have that will lead to the day to be." — *Cope.*

DENVER, Colo., ———

My dear ———*:*

The following is from the *Christian Science Sentinel* of November 6, 1902: —

"'Identity is the reflection of Spirit' (*Science and Health*, p. 477). But what is it that reflects? When I experience a desire to turn from evil, to turn toward good in any degree or in any direction, that desire is certainly a reflection of Spirit, God; but what is the 'I' that experiences?

"There is no such existence. This very sense or supposition of an 'I' to experience a desire, is the false sense of personality, the cloud that seems to hide the real identity."

And, from *Science and Health* (p. 339): —

"Since God is All, there is no room for His opposite."

In a letter to me, one of the clearest theological thinkers of to-day analyzes in an extremely interesting manner the foregoing propositions, as follows: —

"A 'sense or supposition,' but no one to be the subject of this sense or supposition! And a reality hidden by a cloud that has no existence; — and only 'seems' to be hidden!

"Think a moment. Begin at the beginning; let us lay a foundation of possible philosophic concept by the affirmation of a primal thing of which we can feel sure. Let us lay down a fundamental postulate that we can feel that we know. Is there any conception of which each can say: 'This I know; not from authority, nor from testimony, but from the inherent nature of the thing itself, I *know it*'? Let us lay down some fundamental principle of rational thought as a basis for logical deduction. For all logical thought must be founded upon some self-evident primitive postulate.

"Is there any affirmation of which we can say, 'I know'? There is indeed! For we go to the very absoluteness of certainty when we declare that the fact of consciousness is the one absolute knowledge of man. Understand, I do not say that we can trust what consciousness seems to say to us; for we cannot. Nor do I say that our conclusions drawn from consciousness are reliable. They are not. We may be entirely mistaken concerning the nature of the things that consciousness seems to reveal to us. We may misunderstand the source of our consciousness, and its meaning. But that we are — as a fact — conscious, cannot be denied.

"For the sake of illustration, bring this conception into very simple experiences. We seem to be sitting in a room. That is what our consciousness tells us. Are we sure of it? No; we may be deceived about that — perhaps we are dreaming. But whether dreaming or not, we think we are sitting there. If not sitting there, then the seeming is the fact of consciousness. We must be conscious at least of the seeming, to be able to think of it, and especially to speak of it. Again, our consciousness tells us that we are ill. Perhaps we are not ill, notwithstanding that fact of consciousness. The ailments we may seem to have may be fictitious, hallucinations. But however many errors there may be in our beliefs, the fact that we at least seem to be sick is absolutely unassailable.

"This separation of the question of the fact of consciousness from that of reliability of our interpretation of that fact, is of immense moment in logical thinking; for the recognition of the fact enables us to understand both how to think of creation, and the office of 'mortal mind.' Agreeing with Christian Scientists that man is in reality a 'thought of God,' we hold that this thought, in order to realize its individual identity, must be so projected from its Source as to at least seem to have an independent self-existence. That *seeming* — which I have just called the fact of consciousness — is man as we view

him ; it is man as he is on earth. It is what Christian Scientists call ' mortal mind.'

"In the doctrine of creation as thus set forth, we agree with Christian Scientists that God is the Absolute, the Real, and the Only. We hold this so fully that no expressions of Christian Scientists can put it too strongly.

"Further than this, we agree that since this is so, it follows that man has no being in himself, or apart from God. ' In Him we live, and move, and have our being.' All the being, all the reality, all the source of the consciousness which is so surely avouched to us, is God. But it is man's experience of this life — which experience, we will grant, is a seeming — which is man as we view him ; is the man we call the ' natural man.'

" Man thus is two-fold ; the real, the divine man ; and the seeming, the conscious man. The appearance of being alive, this fact of consciousness, is what we are as creatures of God. And, on the other hand, we have, within this creature, the divine man ; the man who is the thought of God ; the perfect man who is a veritable Son of God ; perfect and unassailable by pain or sin."

Continuing, he then attempts to explain the purposes of the Infinite Creator : —

"But why this two-foldedness ? Why could not God bring out His thoughts into

immediate, direct, and perfect expressions of themselves, in instantaneous self-realization? And, especially, why this seeming of self-life? Why should there be even a belief that there is such a thing as mortal mind?

"The reply is that in such appearance only could there exist anything that is not God. Since God is all reality; since there is nothing out of Him that has being; creation cannot consist in producing another reality, which would be another God; creation results in the production of this seeming. And this seeming, to be a creation at all, must seem to be what God is not — otherwise it would be God and not a creation. Hence its seeming weakness and evil — for these are the things that God is not.

"But why should there be a creation at all if these seemingly dire conditions are laid upon it?

"Because this creation is only a preliminary; it is provisional to a real creation that comes afterward; the creation in which man comes into the realization of this oneness with God; and, thus, of his interior divine life. This preliminary creation is absolutely essential to the subsequent and real creation, that man may have built up in himself a consciousness of *seeming self-life* — as a containing vessel — in which or by means of which may be given him a subsequent consciousness of God. Man in this first state is an inversion of God, — that he may be a basis for

the later realization of God 'right side up.' This natural man, 'mortal mind,' this seeming which we find ourselves to be, is the scaffolding to the building; the mold to the casting; the matrix to the image. We now *seem* to be, for the purpose of attaining afterward to true being; we are at first 'mortal minds' that we may be born again into *images of God.* Our consciousness, with all its illusions, is the foundation of future consciousness without illusion — a consciousness of God."

Do you find a satisfaction in asserting that, in the foregoing, the notion that the Perfect can create the imperfect — even for the purpose that the latter may attain perfection — is an inconsistency? Mrs. Eddy more than intimates that it is an absurdity, which dilemma she avoids by postulating the "seeming," as does my correspondent; but she fails even to attempt to give a reason for this seeming existence of the seeming. Does her method dispose of it?

The foregoing attempted explanation of the purpose of the Infinite creation is the best that I have ever seen, and justifies the "natural man," "mortal mind." But, since it may be

justly held that he fails to explain, does the failure not support my contention in an earlier letter to you, that we cannot understand the Infinite? And we do not need to understand. Nor is it necessary for us to justify "the natural man," "mortal mind." It is its own justification — as a part of the Divine creative plan.

Repudiate, as a thing of evil — as do Christian Scientists — man's experience on the physical plane? Throw away and condemn the ladder by which — and only by which — man climbs to knowledge of the supreme value of things spiritual as compared with all else? As well may the student of higher mathematics deny — because he now has no occasion to revert to them — that axioms were the bases of his first steps. As well may the finished pianist, able now to interpret in the most spiritual way a Mozart or a Beethoven, repudiate — merely because forgotten as a thing of the past — the labor of his earlier experiences in perfecting his mechanical action.

We cannot know the "why" of the Infinite Mind, nor do we need to know. We may not understand the "how," nor do we need to do so. We have to deal only with the facts that we do know.

As one of the greatest thinkers the world has known (Swedenborg) says: "The things which flow in through the external way are the sensual things of the body; but they do not flow in of themselves, but are called forth by means of the internal man, in order that they may serve as a plane for the celestial and spiritual things which inflow from the divine through the internal way."

I wish to carry a little further the line of thought suggested by the quotations that precede this letter.

You look upon man as a reflection of God, and cite — as illustrations — a reflection in a mirror and a ray of light from the sun. But to my mind these are not analogous to the relation man bears to his Infinite Cause. Man is more than a reflection; he is an expression, a manifestation; he has conscious-

ness — is conscious of his own existence, of his own entity, of his emotions, his intellectual and physical capabilities. And existence is *being*. Being must manifest itself.

The notion of the individual entity of the ego — even, including its expression on the mental and physical planes — in no way detracts, in my opinion, from the oneness of the Absolute.

One quality of Divine Being we conceive as Love — Infinite Love. Love, whether in the human, or in the Infinite, is unthinkable except it have somewhat — other than itself — upon which it can exercise itself. And has the Source whence it emanated been diminished in any degree by love that has been manifested? On the contrary, we know that even in man the love impulse increases with each accepted opportunity for its expression. Did the love that Mrs. Eddy manifested in writing "Science and Health" decrease, or increase, her capacity for loving? And yet this expression of herself became manifest as something other than herself — yet, in a sense, as part of herself.

Do you claim — in this connection — that in a work of love one is but the instrument through which the Infinite Love works? I agree with that; in the last analysis all comes from God. But the Divine love-impulse, God-implanted in me, is there for *me* to heed or to pervert as *my* God-implanted will decides. In the parable of the talents, he that hid his talent in the ground chose to do so, and no attempt to blame "devil" or "mortal mind" as the cause, would have freed him from his self-condemnation. He that improved his talent chose to do so, and in so doing placed himself in accord with the eternal principles of right — God — and with a consequent increase in his capabilities.

We may think of the ego, man, as having his anchorage in the Source whence he came, yet a separate entity; and that, as an expression of Infinite Love and himself imbued with love, no diminution of the Source is caused thereby; necessarily a separate entity, else would God have only himself to love. Carrying this further, why may we not think

of this individuality of the ego as involving the idea that man is in like manner inherently possessed of other qualities that we ascribe to the Infinite? — such as:

(a). Will. Whether I shall, or shall not, do that which I know to be right, I determine for myself; otherwise I am an automaton, and am *not responsible for my acts.*

(b). Intellect. Mrs. Eddy says "The time for thinkers has come."

(c). Even the power of perception through the physical senses, by means of which, aided by reason, man may come to interpret the universe as "God's spiritual concept"; — all of these, without having lessened the infinite character of God, their Source.

VI

"To me the converging objects of the universe perpetually flow.
All are written to me and I must get what the writing means." — *Walt Whitman.*

DENVER, Colo., ———

Dear ———*:*

I claim that, in a philosophy that declares spirit to be All — to the exclusion of all else, in which sense Mrs. Eddy makes that declaration — reason has no more legitimate place than have the physical senses, since the former is no more on the spiritual plane than are the latter. And yet, through her approving reference to the syllogism, and her appeal to logic (the science of methodical reasoning), Mrs. Eddy legitimatizes intellect, but declares the physical senses and their evidence to be products of "mortal mind" — unreal — evil. I have already shown what I believe to be the validity of the use of the latter (the evidence of the senses) as a basis for reaching the conclusion that the substan-

tiality of objective phenomena cannot be proven; — and, at the same time, as a basis for the possibility of a belief in the reality of the incomprehensible.

The same reasoning applies to every form of human life and consciousness. An *image* of infinitude is in every possible direction. Every physical seed, in its endless potentiality of growth through the cycles of the future; and in its ability to multiply till it fills all earths — that is, without limit — is an image of the same thing; and this — for me — without restricting, in any degree, the Absolute.

On the contrary, as Emerson says, "The true doctrine of omnipresence is that God reappears with all His parts in every moss and cobweb," and, "We can never see Christianity from the catechism; from the pastures, from a boat on the pond, from amidst the songs of wood-birds, we possibly may."

With his senses, man perceives a physical sun — (not a "material" sun — we have repudiated the word). The fact that to these

senses it appeared at one time that the sun rotated around the earth, might possibly — as Christian Scientists make use of the fact — be a justification for the repudiation of the testimony of the senses, except for the fact that it was these same senses, aided by reason, that finally evolved the theory, now accepted, as to the movements of the sun and the earth relative to each other. Surely the spiritual sense had no share in bringing about this corrected interpretation of astronomical phenomena.

But the spiritual sense *is* responsible for the interpretation of the beneficent warmth of this sun as a manifestation of Infinite Love, its cause; and of the light of this sun as an expression of Infinite Wisdom, its cause. But, before this interpretation was possible, the physical senses must have seen and felt.

Mrs. Eddy speaks of the rose as "a smile of God." But this idea would be impossible to one with no sense of sight, or smell, through which, if at all, must be perceived the beauty and the fragrance, which

are the characteristics that give to the spiritual sense the opportunity that begets the thought so beautifully expressed.

The smile of God is indeed in the rose, but the love of God is made manifest in no slighter degree in the much less beautiful root. The Divine Mind is as fully revealed in the havoc-working avalanche, properly viewed, as in the falling rain.

"The heavens are telling the glory of God and the firmament showeth his handiwork," but

> "'T is not in the high stars alone,
> Nor in the cup of budding flowers,
> Nor the red-breast's mellow tone,
> Nor in the bow that smiles in showers,
> But in the mud and scum of things,
> There always, always, something sings."

I see fair fields, silvery streams, the sweep and curve of woodland or of mountain range, the restless toil of mighty ocean; I behold the radiance of the orb of day, and, when his light is withdrawn, the glories of the star-strewn vault are unrolled; aye, I see the marvelous mechanism of the human body.

All things such as these reveal — for me — the Infinite Love and Wisdom.

> "As wider skies broke on his view,
> God greatened in his growing mind;
> Each year he dreamed his God anew,
> And left his older God behind.
>
> "He saw the mighty scheme dilate,
> In star and blossom, sky and clod,
> And as the universe grew great,
> He dreamed for it a greater God."

What is it that we love in our fellow-man? Not intellectual attainments or potentialities; these we but admire. It is spiritual qualities, developed or latent, that inspire love. But I cannot know of these in a fellow-man unless they be expressed. And this can only be through some deed of kindness, some act of service, a word, or a facial expression; each and all possible of manifestation *on the plane of sense-life only*, involving the use of the body. And I must see the act or its consequence, or hear the word, before I am able to think or to say of the impulse, that it originated in the spiritual. Effect must precede a disposition to even look for cause. Whether

or not I agree with Christian Science, I believe Mrs. Eddy to have been impelled by the highest spirituality, manifested finally in a book. And whether or not this contain truth, I must read it with my sense of sight before I can determine.

This idea — that one cannot discern the spiritual qualities in another, except primarily through the physical senses, and except they be manifested on the physical plane — I recently suggested to a friend, a Christian Scientist. And though I had just previously cautioned her that by "physical" I did not mean "material," as the materialist uses the latter word, she remarked, "I don't see how you can call 'evil' good." I disclaimed having done so. "But you call 'matter' good," she insisted. I hadn't been talking about matter at all.

That she could not make the discrimination, that I sought, between the ideas "physical" and "material," I believe to be due to the constant iteration and reiteration — in *Science and Health* — of the words

"matter" and "material," and the less frequent, though indiscriminating, use of the word "physical"; so that when either of them was used it meant to her nothing but material "*atoms*."

To the same friend I once presented the idea of one's inability to think of the rose as "the smile of God," except it first be perceived by the physical senses. She wanted to know if "the savage would see the rose as the smile of God" — meaning, of course, that his lack of spiritual development would prevent, for him, such thought. Granted that this be so, it had no bearing whatsoever upon my contention. If you and I are listening to a Greek, the fact that you understand the Greek language and that I lack that ability does not disprove the notion that to understand it one must first hear it.

VII

"For, what we call this life of man on earth,
This sequence of the soul's achievements here,
Being, as I find much reason to conceive,
Intended to be viewed eventually
As a great whole, not analyzed to parts,
But each part having reference to all."

— *Browning.*

DENVER, Colo., ———

Dear Friend ———*:*

Remember, I am merely suggesting to you what comes to me — I offer it not dogmatically.

You say "God is good and is All, consequently there can be no evil." But I think that I believe this in a way fully as comprehensive, as absolute, as you do.

"God 's in his heaven,
All 's right with the world."

Evil is ignorance — (a substitution of one negation for another ?) — an absence of knowledge — knowledge of laws that originate in the spiritual and that are everywhere and

always operative on the three planes of man's life.

God created man that He might have something to love, and without lessening His infiniteness. He endowed man with a will, with which to choose to conform or to *not* conform to spiritual law, as, through perception and experience, he comes to know it. And He has ordained that man shall suffer if he chooses not to put himself in consonance with His laws. Though man sin, God beholds and says, "It is good; he will come to know, through the consequence of his sin." It is in this sense that I look upon evil as a negation; and that that which — in isolated, individual separateness — appears as evil, disappears as such when the whole scheme is contemplated of the purpose of man's existence in the flesh — the development of *character.*

Mrs. Eddy expresses this same notion when she says, "Sorrow is salutary, through great tribulation we enter the Kingdom, trials are the proof of God's care." But *sorrow* is

purely a *mental* state, and as negative as evil. And "sorrow is salutary," not evil — according to Mrs. Eddy — the crucible in which man, through experience in his life on the physical plane, comes to know of the consequences of the violation of spiritual law; consequences avoidable had he but known. In the Bible, the reproof of the slothful servant is but symbolical of his remorse, of his self-condemnation; the "well done, thou good and faithful servant," symbolizing the happiness that comes from a consciousness of harmony with spiritual law.

Muriel Strode, in *My Little Book of Prayer*, says: —

> I begged to escape from suffering; I prayed to God to save my soul from sin. To-day I stand aghast at the thing I should have been had my prayer been heard.

It does seem as though it is necessary for man to experience "sorrow," "trials," "great tribulation"; to go down into the depths, before he can understand and appreciate that

"To have is oft to lose — the quaffed cup holds
No promise of sweet wine. O fools and blind —
To take the less for the more, the passing day
For an eternity of triune joy!
Better long æons of pure ecstasy
Than transient moments of voluptuous bliss,
Which burn to leave dead ashes in their track."

In *The Ballad of Reading Gaol,* Oscar Wilde expresses his appreciation of this thought, born of his experience: —

"Ah! happy they whose hearts can break
And peace of pardon win!
How else may man make straight his plan
And cleanse his soul from sin?
How else but through a broken heart
May Lord Christ enter in?"

But does not the fact that only through experience do we come to know, seem to indicate man's life on the physical plane — with all that *seems* evil to his limited vision — to be a part of the beneficent Divine creative plan, rather than a product of "mortal mind," with the meaning the devotees of Christian Science have come to give this expression — a synonym for the "devil"?

There being, as I have shown in my former letters, a legitimacy to the physical in con-

sidering the Infinite plan, I cannot avoid a reasoning similar to the foregoing when considering pain and disease, resulting in the conclusion that they are as valid as sorrow. As the latter brings man to a recognition of his inharmony with God's laws on the spiritual plane, so the former — warnings that God's laws that govern on the physical plane are being violated — are in that sense as salutary as sorrow. Remember, I do not look upon these laws as "laws of matter," a term so objectionable to you; they are laws emanating from the Divine source and pertain to the physical (*not* "material") phenomena.

So, for me, the human body, being *not* a product of "mortal mind," but, instead, the habitation of the ego — no less so because a microscopic examination of the brain fails to disclose mind — is as worthy an object of admiration as is the rose. And, if it be not permitted to induce a morbid interest in the physical, a knowledge of physiology — which is under condemnation with you and with those who think with you — seems to me to

be as justifiable as is a study of botany, that is, the physiology of plants, which you permit.

Having in mind that certain physical laws (not "material" laws, *not* laws of "mortal mind," but laws established by Infinite Love and Wisdom) declare that man needs fresh air and sunshine for the maintenance of his body, a reasonable attention to hygienic conditions — avoiding any tendency to morbid mental absorption in them — is in accord with the intent which those laws manifest.

A friend of mine asked a Christian Scientist why she ventilates her home. She replied, resentingly, "Not for health purposes, certainly."* He forebore pressing for an explanation, understanding that she meant that she ventilates solely because vitiated air is unpleasant to her. But, even so, is not the resulting disagreeableness a mere mental concept, in the sense in which you claim lack of health to be? Why ventilate?

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*The Christian Scientist may do no act "for health purposes."

Since you are a musician, I shall end this letter by trying to make clearer my meaning in regard to the non-existence of evil, by using a musical symbol.

Imagine a musical composition that concludes with a sub-tonic chord, or with a dissonance. First, could the resulting mental pain be, except through the physical sense of hearing? And is not this consciousness of incompleteness, this yearning for the tonic chord, the rest-note, illustrative of man's realization — through experience and the protests of conscience — of having not chosen the right way; symbolical of his longing for the ideal, the spiritual; illustrative also, through the physical sense of pain, of his inharmony with God's laws that govern on the physical plane?

But, the fact that the dissonance is a legitimate part of the completed symphony, and that it is not discordant unless heard separate or apart, is analogous to my notion that sorrow, evil, pain, are "salutary," have their

uses, and are not evil except they be regarded without considering their relation to the whole of man's conscious existence.

It is in this sense that I believe "All is good, there is no evil."

> "To feel, although no tongue can prove,
> That every cloud that spreads above
> And veileth love, itself is love;
> All discord, harmony not understood."

VIII

DENVER, Colo., ———

Dear Friend ———*:*

In the face of the phenomena connected with mental science, faith-healing, New Thought, Spiritual Science, Christian Science, hypnotism — to say nothing of the ordinary psychological phenomena of every-day life — no thoughtful person dare deny the influence of the states of the mind over the body — for good or for ill. And I believe that, superior to these and through these, the spiritual forces of the Divine Mind work.

Did I believe — in the way that you do — that spirit is all; that consequently there can be no legitimate place for the intellectual or physical; that these are illusions of "mortal mind"; there could be for me but the conclusion that the alleged "demonstrations" prove the truth of Christian Science. But, believing the intellectual and physical to be legitimate parts of the "universe, God's

spiritual concept"; and seeing that healings of physical illnesses — aye, and spiritual illnesses — result from, or at any rate follow, mental therapeutic methods other than yours, I again insist, for myself, upon the right to inquire if some law be not common to them all.

God is the power; what is the law, what the process?

You will be as ready as I — doubtless even more ready — to claim that a very considerable percentage of the cases of illness for which physicians have been called would have disappeared without such intervention. And I maintain that the same applies to a very large percentage of alleged Christian Science cures.

There is no one who has not experienced ailments that have, as one might say, "disappeared of themselves" — a cut, a bruise, a head-ache, a fever, and even more serious indispositions, to which, because of the mind having been otherwise occupied, little or no attention was paid; the disappearance doubt-

less indirectly accelerated because of the lack of attention.

Was any remedial force at work other than the power of Nature?

As to cures that have been brought about through mental therapeutics, "whatever the powers may be that accomplish the effects we are considering in reference to our mental states, they cannot be essentially different from the forces that do such things in the ordinary experience of life. He who is ill, if he be properly cared for, and if his vital forces have sufficient strength, will recover, and we say the power of Nature did it. For the man who breaks an arm, the power of Nature will, in a marvelous way, form new bone at the point of fracture and knit the pieces together.

"What is this 'power of Nature' that performs thus, in the common experience of us all, a cure as wonderful as any claimed by faith-curist, Christian Scientist, mental scientist, or hypnotist? If, by the power of Nature, we mean some inherent, inanimate force

of 'material particles,' then the words express a doctrine from the infernal regions. The power of Nature in healing a broken arm is simply the power of *life*, which in a marvelous way descends into the body from the Infinite Source of life and effects the cure.

"All healing, then, of the kind we are considering must be looked upon as simply results of methods whereby the fountains of life are more copiously opened and obstacles removed that prevent their influence. Healing from what is looked upon as some spiritual cause, and healing by means of what we call the ordinary processes of Nature, must in their essence be identical. Both are the effects of the power of life. Both are from God."

The law is the law of suggestion; the process is the removing of the mental obstacles to the operation of the life-giving, life-maintaining forces from the spiritual, which are the effective causes of phenomena *mani-*

fested on the physical plane. But this process is not peculiar to Christian Science alone.

In many cases there is necessary only a diversion of the mind to another channel, a substitution of a new habit of thought for the existing one. In other cases an efficient aid may come through a belief in the proposed remedy, which belief itself acts as the diversion.

I believe that, in cases where cures have followed the "treatments" of Christian Science healers — cases in which the mental state needed some kind of intervention to give the life-forces opportunity — sometimes the mere diversion was all that was operative; sometimes the diversion that came from the belief that in the philosophy itself lay some curative force.

So long ago as 1784, Benjamin Franklin wrote from Paris in regard to mesmerism:

"Mesmer is still here. . . . I suppose all the physicians in France put together have not made so much money, during the time

he has been here, as he alone has done. . . . There are so many disorders which cure themselves, and such a disposition in mankind to deceive themselves and one another on these occasions; and living long has given me so many opportunities of seeing certain remedies cried up as curing everything and yet soon after laid aside as useless; I cannot but fear that the expectation of great advantage from this new method of treating diseases will prove a delusion. That delusion may, however, and in some cases will, be of use while it lasts. There are in every great, rich city, a number of persons who are never in health, because they are fond of medicines and are always taking them, whereby they derange the natural functions and hurt their constitution. If these people can be persuaded to forbear their drugs, in expectation of being cured by only the physician's finger — or an iron rod — pointing at them, they may possibly find good effects, though they may mistake the cause." (Sparks' *Franklin*, vol. 1, p. 504.)

You will — as will I — commend Franklin for his incredulity in respect to this particular "delusion," as he calls it; and for his condemnation of the drug habit. But it is to the final clause that I wish to call your attention — "though they may mistake the cause."

You will agree that they did mistake the cause. And you will claim that the cause was mental, and I agree to that. But I contend that the results — as were those following the incantations of the Indian "medicine-man" and the treatment of mental scientist, Christian Scientist, hypnotist, and so on — were because of the subconscious action of the changed line of conscious thought, manifesting itself in the restoration of the natural function of the organs of a "physical" body.

IX

"Our highest truths are but half-truths.
Think not to settle down in any truth.
Make use of it as a tent in which to pass a summer night,
but build no house of it, or it will be your tomb."
— *Ernest Crosby.*

DENVER, Colo., ———

Dear Friend ———*:*

Not long ago, one of the leading physicians of Chicago read a paper before the Chicago Literary Club, exhibiting such a marked departure from the usual line of thought of the old-time practitioners, and of such value to this present discussion, that I quote at length from it: —

". . . . The soul, however distinct its image to the eye of faith, is not visible to the eye of physiology, and hence is beyond the pale of this discussion; those phenomena which, from habit and convenience, we call the mind, are manifestations of force inherent in the physical universe, and are different in no wise, except in degree, from the phenomena displayed by the lowliest creatures that have received the divine afflatus — life.

". . . . Certain functions of the body seem to be endowed with an intelligence of their own — independent of the conscious, individual mind; that is, from the standpoint of this conscious mind, they are automatic. This automatic intelligence — which is plainly the inherited, crystallized experience of countless ancestors in the preservation of the race — we call instinct, or emotion.

"The egoistic mind of man, his conscious memory and his reason, whereby his instinctive mind establishes communication with the outside world, is biologically merely the servant of this instinct; it is the dog leading the blind man, but only a dog after all.

"My main proposition in the biological definition of mind is, therefore, that the instincts are the essential mind, the transmitted intelligence of the race, and that they directly control the vital organs; while the conscious intellect is the subservient mind, which has no direct communication with the essential organs.

"That the emotions are directly — the reason only indirectly — associated with the vital bodily functions needs no demonstration, because illustrations are familiar to all. Thus, no man can at will strengthen or weaken his heart-beat, accelerate or retard his pulse, blanch or redden his cheek, arrest his digestion, evacuate his stomach, or increase the secretion of his sweat-glands; yet when dominated by the instincts fear, anger,

grief, and so forth, he regularly does one or other of those things, even against the dictates of reason. This absolute control of the instinctive — as distinguished from the rational — mind over vital organs, is nicely shown at the first surgical clinic of a medical college term, when one or more freshman spectators on the benches become faint or nauseated as soon as the teacher of surgery spills blood.

"That a mental influence which so completely dominates vital functions can, by excessive or prolonged activity, derange those functions, is both plausible and demonstrable; and it is equally true that an arrest of such emotional activity may be followed by a restoration of normal functions.

"Mental influences are valuable in the treatment of disease in so far as they secure a proper balance of the patient's emotions, and, through these, normal bodily functions. Mental influences have, therefore, a theoretical increment of value even in organic disease, since by calming the fear of death or other strong emotion, they may improve digestion, circulation, and so forth, and thus enable the body to battle more vigorously with the invader. That the aid afforded through the patient's mind against such tangible foes is, however, trivial, is illustrated by the familiar observation that the consumptive's confidence in his ultimate recovery often increases as he approaches the grave.

The physician whose cheery, confident presence rivals the sunshine in the sick chamber, secures the patient's affection, but not his recovery, thereby.

"Mental influences are of demonstrable value, however, in the treatment not of organic, but of functional — that is, emotional — disease. This is the field in which mental suggestion — whether called by its proper title, or misnamed Christian Science, faith cure, animal magnetism, Divine healing, hypnotism, or the bone of a saint — does unquestionably cure an occasional patient whom physicians, drugs, and reason have failed to relieve.

"Physicians include such emotional states under the general term hysteria. Now this word does not mean, as the average layman thinks, merely an alternation of senseless laughter and tears; nor does it imply, as the average physician thinks, conscious deceit on the part of the hysterical patient. Hysteria means any functional derangement due to emotion, and displays affections of all parts of the body, such as dyspepsia, paralysis, rigidity of joints, spinal curvature, the trance, even blindness; and the derangements may be just as honest and real, just as beyond the control of the conscious mind, as are the nausea, faintness, even vomiting, induced in many by a ghastly sight or a disgusting odor. Any influence which will restore the emotional balance of such a patient will thereby

rapidly cure an hysterical disease, even blindness. Physicians, busied with the obvious ravages of organic disease, too often ignore the subtle influence of the emotions; and their negligence is the opportunity of the charlatan.

"Though it has been my fortune to see a woman who had suffered the agonies of strangulated hernia and peritonitis for five days under faith-cure treatment, snatched from death by the surgeon's knife; and to see a horrible ulcer which for six weeks had been eating away the nose of a young matron under Christian Science treatment, promptly arrested and healed by remedies for syphilis; yet such ignorant — yes, criminal — failures to influence curable organic disease do not in the least argue against the power of mental suggestion over functional disease. That it is the one remedy for disease of emotional origin is exemplified in the following personal observation: —

"Some years ago an unmarried lady about thirty years of age was afflicted with an apparently fatal disease. At the time this observation began she had been bed-ridden for a year; had become emaciated and too weak even to feed herself; one leg was partly paralyzed; for months her eyes had been unable to endure the faintest ray of light. Her room had been kept absolutely dark, and to this dungeon had been admitted only her mother, her nurse, and her physicians, whose

skillful ministrations had, however, failed to check her gradual decline. The most exhaustive examination failing to reveal any organic disease, an emotional cause for her bodily ailment was assumed, although inquiry in her family disclosed no trace of a faithless lover, cruel parent, or other orthodox agency in cardiac fracture.

"The following plan of treatment was instituted: she was told that her ailment was due to sewer-gas, and that her removal to a sanitary dwelling would at once start her on the road to recovery. I may say, incidentally, that the popular faith in sewer-gas, malaria, and more recently, grippe, as the explanation of all obscure ailments, smooths down many rough places in the path of the physician.

"Accordingly, on the appointed day, her eyes were thickly bandaged, she was lifted into a closely curtained stretcher, carried carefully to a covered wagon, driven a half-mile to a railway, where a special train, including a tightly curtained Pullman sleeper, awaited her; transported in this car to an adjoining suburb, driven in another wagon to her new home, and finally deposited, almost dead from fright and fatigue, in her carefully darkened chamber.

"The new residence possessed, besides its freedom from sewer gas, two attractive features; from its windows were visible on the one side the buildings of the "White City,"

even then beginning to unfold the glories which later charmed the world; and on the other side were often displayed, on the person of a young lady neighbor, some of the 'swellest' gowns in town. The charms of these rival expositions were casually but continually dinned into the ears of the patient, because high in the category of feminine emotions stand curiosity and love of the beautiful.

"Three weeks after her removal, the lady was sitting at her window, admiring the mighty buildings and criticizing the dry-goods; and some weeks later she was promenading the Fairgrounds and leading the rush line at Field's bargain-counter.

"Now, what ailed this young woman, and what cured her? Her disease was plainly a derangement of her physical functions caused by an ungratified instinct, although which of her emotions was the active agent can be even now only conjectured; indeed, she may herself have been unconscious of its identity. Her recovery would have been ascribed to the drugs administered, to Christian Science, Divine healing, holy relics, or animal magnetism, had her physician so proclaimed. It was actually a successful struggle against her ungratified, unidentified instinct, by her other emotions — faith, curiosity, and love of the beautiful — which were aroused to the unconscious strife by the suggestions of her physician; and she is to-day a healthy and happy example of the value of mental im-

pressions in the treatment of emotional disease."

Who has not had the experience of stopping, by a funny story or some grotesqueness, a child's crying — and that, too, more or less quickly — over some pretty hard bump that really hurt?

With a little child who is not in the habit of crying without cause, I have, by pretending to remove — with a toothpick — something from between the teeth, stopped a crying spell caused by a tooth-ache. True, it was probably not a case of nerve-exposure.

In my presence a little girl, slightly stung by a bee, ran screaming toward her parents. The mother, a Christian Scientist, was about to hurry the child into the house and "treat" her, but the father interposed and very quickly quieted her with a few words. Had the child gone with the mother, the latter would have claimed a "demonstration" for Christian Science. It would have been (as was the result of the father's act, and as in the case of the bump, and of the tooth-ache) a demonstration

of the pain-alleviating effect of diverting the mind into different channels, but not a proof, for me, of the Christian Science philosophy.

Last summer I was at San Pedro, California, and while waiting for the boat to start for Avalon, — it was tied to the dock in water absolutely quiet, there was not the slightest motion, — a rosy-cheeked, buxom miss, one of a group of young folk, became seasick and vomited over the boat's rail. A young man, one of the party, started a very entertaining story, and, as he was a charming story-teller, he had the group interested at once, and the girl's seasickness was dispelled, forgotten. That's just it! She forgot the notion of seasickness.

You and I may agree that the thought of seasickness that she had consciously held had worked subconsciously upon her internal organs and produced nausea; and that this had been counteracted by the substitution of another line of thought. But, had a Christian Scientist been the immediate instrument of this cure, at once would have entered our

disagreement. You would have claimed that the "demonstration" proved the truth of Christian Science, with all that that implies; while I claim that there would have been involved no question of the character of the objective universe, the reality of evil, the individuality of the ego, and so forth.

And I also claim that the manifestation was on a *physical* plane, the changed state of mind resulting in the normal action of a physical body.

Though the illustrations I have cited are so commonplace, there enters into all phenomena of suggestive therapeutics these same questions of what is involved and what is not involved, and, for me, the same conclusion.

As I have said in a former letter, we know nothing of the nature of the objective universe. Though the chemist were able to resolve the diamond into one primary element, he would not know what it is that he then held. We do not need to know. But, that we do not know is not, for me, sufficient reason for denying the reality of the objects

of our senses. As reasonable would it be to deny the reality of mind, merely because we are ignorant of its nature, as absolutely as we are of the nature of matter (so-called).

Nor do we need to know what it is that constitutes mind; we know only the results of its action.

We do know that the thought held consciously acts subconsciously on the organs of the body. And we know as little of the actual process of this action as we know of the character of mind or "matter." And the knowledge necessary for us is, not how this action takes place, but that it does occur.

X

" . . . . There is no Death ! . . .
And every change which we ascribe to Death
Is but a change in form or state
Of something which can never cease to live."
— *Wm. H. Holcombe, in "New Thanatopsis."*

DENVER, Colo., ———

Dear Friend ———*:*

When it comes to giving consideration to the Christian Scientist's view of death, so-called — (I say "so-called," for "who knows but life be that which men call death, and death what men call life?") — one is confronted with the difficult problem of having to determine what the Christian Scientist's position is.

Mrs. Eddy, in *Science and Health*, writes: "Those who reach this transition called death," and so forth. And, again, in *Science and Health* is the suggestion that the greater longevity (Mrs. Eddy's own word) of the race will be the result of the influence

of the universal acceptance of Christian Science. These seem to give validity to the idea of the cessation, at some time, of the phenomenon of the physical manifestation of the individual ego.

Yet, from your letters and from conversations with Christian Scientists, I find this idea to be abrogated, and the notion of merely increased longevity — through the elimination of disease, because of the spiritualization of the race — carried to the extremity of a belief that, through Christian Science, the "transition called death" will be altogether avoided. And it is argued that the spiritual man knows not time; hence even "old age" (with its accompanying decline of the physical powers), being a product of "mortal mind," will no longer be. Therefore, "death" from that cause also is a circumstance inconceivable were the principles enunciated in *Science and Health* to dominate absolutely.

I can conceive of one being in such a state of rapture — consequent upon his complete

absorption in something that intensely interests him, such as religion, a book, the carrying a new line of thought to its conclusion, and so forth — as to be absolutely oblivious to all discomforts, ordinary or extreme.

I can even conceive of this state of mind being so continuously prolonged that he can experience the "transition called death" without even being conscious of it. But, that this transition will not come, — through starvation, freezing, asphyxiation, loss of blood, and so forth, — even though his mental exaltation be one of complete spirituality, it is not necessary, to me, to be believed.

Similarly, for me, it is not inharmonious with the Divine plan that man (as we know him on the physical plane), — though his life approach consonance with spiritual law, and increasingly so as his years progress; and though he ignore the element of time, having reached his three score years and ten — or a Methuselan age, as the case may be — shall "wrap the drapery of his couch about him and lie down to pleasant dreams."

And, though man be "cut off" prematurely by accident* or by disease, these are manifestations of the action of forces emanating from the spiritual, and, for me, are not evil.

Surely, the Christian Scientist ought to agree that these seeming evils are at any rate not irreparable, since Mrs. Eddy says, in *Science and Health*, "Those who reach this transition called death, without having rightly improved the lessons of this primary school of mortal existence . . . awake only to another sphere of experience and must pass through another probationary state."

With this statement in mind, why such an intense desire on the part of the Christian Scientist to keep himself, or others, indefinitely "in the flesh"? Why such a preponderating consideration of the maintenance of a physical body, — a consideration carried to such an extent among your devotees as to take precedence, to a great degree, of the

* There is no such thing as accident, but let that pass, here.

contemplation of things spiritual? The result of this has been that Christian Science has come to be looked upon as, primarily, a system of therapeutics. In support of this last assertion I point to the fact that it is almost always to physical cures that attention of unbelievers in Christian Science is called; and that it is through physical cures that you seek to — and do — gain proselytes.

Why this consuming interest in the prevention of the "death" of the body, when it is possible — if one has real confidence in God — to have faith that "real being cannot die; that the very fact of life, in any form, means the continuance of life even though the form be changed"*; and that there is "another probationary state," † and so forth?

You will reply that it is because wrong mental condition — and, back of that, an ignorance of spiritual law — is manifested in a diseased body, that you are so interested in the cure of disease.

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* Not from Mrs. Eddy. † From Mrs. Eddy.

I agree — nay, I assert — that fear, hate, envy, jealously, anger — forms of selfishness, all — disturb the normal action of the functions of the body, resulting in disorder. And I also agree, and assert, that the substitution of the opposites of these malign emotions — in other words, unselfishness, *love* — tends to correct such disorder as these formerly dominating influences caused.

This is Christian Science, you say? But, certain qualifications upon which I place considerable emphasis mark the difference between your position and mine: —

First: — Such conditions as result from fear, hate, and so forth, are not evil but good, in that they serve to show that the realization of the true spiritual state does not prevail.

Second: — The result of the changed mental state is an orderly resumption of the functions of the organs of a physical body, upon which you look (as you do on all things physical) as a product of "mortal mind," evil.* "What

* In the *New York Herald*, December 6, 1908, Mr. Alfred Farlow, of Boston (general manager of the Chris-

God has cleansed, call thou not common or unclean."

Third: — Though this principle (that love will correct what selfishness has caused) come to absolutely dominate the consciousness of the race, yet shall the "transition called death" never be avoided, ultimately. The result will be merely a greater individual and racial longevity.

Fourth (and one of the most important): —

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tian Science Committee on Publication), takes issue as follows with Bishop Fallows, of Chicago, on the position the latter takes, similar to the above:

"Christian Science affirms . . . that when mortals become fully conscious of the spiritual truth of being, the body will manifest perfect harmony — i. e., it will be a perfect expression of the perfect Mind, God."

How can you, or Mr. Farlow, reconcile this assertion with the following from *Science and Health?* —

"Indeed, the body presents no proper likeness of divinity, though mortal mind would fain have us so believe" (p. 302).

". . . the body is the substratum of mortal mind" (p. 371).

"Mortal mind and body are one. . . . Matter, or body, is but a false concept of mortal mind. This so-called mind builds its own superstructure, of which the material body is the grosser part; but from first to last, the body is a sensuous, human concept" (p. 177).

The disorder caused by a cinder in the eye is not to be accounted for as resulting from fear, hate, envy, and so forth, though these may, and doubtless do, aggravate it. And such disorder will be corrected *only by the removal of the cinder;* and for this purpose I was given a physical hand. And, to my mind, the unsolved question is to be able to distinguish between such diseases as are caused by wrong mental states, and those that are analogous to the cinder in the eye; which illustration I have used merely as a type of disorder-producing foreign substances in the human mechanism.

XI

"There is a new strange song in the air."
— *Lathbury*

DENVER, Colo., ———

Dear ———*:*

The tendency of the last fifty years — more or less — has been materialistic; has been to give too great importance to the physical, to the things of the world; manifesting itself increasingly in lust for fame, for power, for position, for wealth. Things spiritual have come to be minimized, to be almost ignored, their consideration having become, too generally, the merest formalism. "There is a new strange song in the air." A reaction, like to that of Puritanism following the licentiousness of the upper classes in England, has set in. Along sociological lines it has taken the form of altruism, a feeling of brotherhood, a desire to establish the relations between man and man on a nearer just basis. This

of itself is a religious expression. But, along more distinctly religious lines, this reaction has manifested itself in many ways; among them, Christian Science, and so forth.

That the tendency has been to invert the real relation between the spiritual and the physical is no justification for repudiating the latter altogether; especially since, to my way of thinking, the latter is an expression of the former.

A realization of the relative values of spiritual things and the things of the world — both kept on their proper plane; the latter, though having their legitimate importance, always subordinated to the former — will result in an equipoise that will prevent the reaction from ultra-materialism to a reasonless idealism. And I do not believe that with you the latter position would have been acceptable, did it not seem to be supported by phenomena (physical, though you have lost sight of that fact) that seem to you otherwise inexplicable.

Have you ever read George Macdonald's fairy story, *The Giant's Heart?* The little girl's song to the mother-lark is so apropos of the risk of so seeking God only in the spiritual, as to ignore His presence in "the mud and scum of things," that I quote part of it:—

The father-lark, soaring up, and up, and always up, to meet the sun (the King), yet unable to find him because of an obscuring cloud, returns to the nest where he had left his wife alone in the morning.

"Did I say alone? Ah, no such thing!
Full in her face was shining the King.
'Welcome, Sir Lark! You look tired,' said he,
'Up is not always the best way to me.
While you have been singing so high and away,
I've been shining to your little wife all day.'"

In the same song is the reproof, when the lark seeks the approval of the sun:—

"'Must I thank you, then,' said the King, 'Sir Lark,
For flying so high and hating the dark?
You ask a full cup for half a thirst;
Half is love of me, and half love to be first.' . . .
And the King hid his head in a turban of cloud,
And the lark stopped singing, quite vexed and cowed."

How suggestive of the necessity for carefully analyzing our motive, before offering to others our ideas; and of the advisability of finding out how much *self*-gratification is involved because our ideas are ours.

Suggestion! — the most potent force in man's experience in the flesh! "One dispiriting word does more than chill; it is a derelict afloat, a dagger-thrust at the divine scheme. Every bright word, like every pleasant air of music, is pleasure in action; it is virtue and goodness at play. The soul nearest us catches the contagion and goes its rejoicing way."

Who can read a *Daniel Deronda*, or any novel of high purpose, without a spiritual uplift? Or the biography of a noble man? "Lives of great men all remind us we can make our lives sublime."

"Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good

report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think of these things." To him that will observe this injunction will come "the peace of God which passeth all understanding."

Clarence Lathbury, in *The Balanced Life*, very beautifully expresses this thought:—

"Wisdom is the mind's health and poise, as love is the health of the heart. Wisdom is to the mind what proportion is to the body; it is that wholesome quality which lends thought, sanity, and music, as the wood and strings of some priceless Stradivarius are made to sound divinely under the hand of the master. . . . Like the sweetness of the summer day, it is something to be experienced rather than defined. It is not learning, nor is it knowledge; but just wisdom past comprehending, shining in the heart of humble folk and little children. It is a psychologic peace imbued with cheerfulness and strength, a sort of effluence of mental bloom. It breathes a holy impartiality, having found that golden mean where error and excess are purged away."

But, as he also says:—

"The body should have full reverence and the complete satisfaction of its God-given

appetities, for in its place it is as holy as the spirit; we should listen to its varied claims without giving it rein. Let us take the risk of living while we may; let us wade deep into the tide of being; . . . every bit of deep true living is just so much more of the dear old world built into the mansion of the soul.

"How beautiful it is to live to make the world happy. Let the song never die away, and the dance never cease; let laughter flow like melodious waters singing to the sea."

(From Emerson's *Self-Reliance.*)

"Everywhere I am bereaved of meeting God in my brother, because he has shut his own temple doors and recites fables merely of his brother's or his brother's brother's God. Every mind is a new classification. If it prove a mind of uncommon activity and power, a Locke, a Lavoisier, a Hutton, a Bentham, a Spurzheim, it imposes its classification on other men, and lo! a new system. In proportion always to the depth of the thought, and so to the number of the objects it touches and brings within reach of the pupil, is his complacency. But chiefly is this apparent in creeds and churches, which are also classifications of some powerful mind acting on the great elemental thought of Duty and man's relation to the Highest. Such is Calvin*ism*, Quaker*ism*, Swedenborgian*ism*. The pupil takes the same delight in subordinating everything to the new terminology that a girl does who has just learned botany, in seeing a new earth and new seasons thereby. It will happen for a time that the pupil will feel a real debt to the teacher— will find his intellectual power has grown by the study of his writings. This will continue until he has exhausted his master's mind. But in all unbalanced minds the classification is idolized, passes for the end

and not for a speedily exhaustible means, so that the walls of the system blend to their eye in the remote horizon with the walls of the universe; the luminaries of heaven seem to them hung on the arch their master built. They cannot imagine how you aliens have any right to see — how you *can* see: 'It must be somehow that you stole the light from us.' They do not yet perceive that light unsystematic, indomitable, will break into any cabin, even into theirs. Let them chirp awhile and call it their own. If they are honest and do well, presently their neat new pinfold will be too strait and low, will crack, will lean, will rot and vanish, and the immortal light, all young and joyful, million-orbed, million-colored, will beam over the universe as on the first morning."

The Parable of the Elephant (from the Chinese).

"There was a noble and mighty elephant, an elephant white in color, with a strong trunk and long tusks, trained by a good master, and willing and serviceable in all the work that elephants are put to. And this noble and mighty elephant, being led by his guide, the good master who had trained him, came to the land of the blind. And it was noised about in the land of the blind that the noble and mighty elephant, the king of all beasts, the wisest of all animals, the strongest and yet the meekest and kindliest of creatures, had made his appearance in their country. So the wise men and teachers of the blind came to the place where the elephant was, and every one began to investigate his shape and figure and form. And when the elephant was gone they met and discussed the problem of the noble and mighty beast, and there were some who said he was like a great thick snake; others said he was like a snake of medium size. The former had felt of the trunk, the latter of the tail. Further, there were some who claimed that his figure was like that of a high column; others declared he was large and bulky, like a big barrel; still others maintained that he was smooth and hard, but taper-

ing. Some of the blind had taken hold of one of the legs; others had reached the main body; and still others had touched the tusks. Every one proposed his view, and they disputed and controverted, and wrangled, and litigated, and bickered, and quarreled, and called each other names, and each one imprecated all the others, and each one denounced all the others, and they abused and scolded, and they anathematized and excommunicated, and finally every one of them swore that every one else was a liar and cursed on account of his heresies. These blind men, every one of them honest in his contentions, being sure of having the truth and relying upon his own experience, formed schools and sects and factions, and behaved in exactly the same way as you see the priests of the different creeds behave. But the master of the noble, mighty elephant knows them all; he knows that every one of them has a parcel of the truth, that every one is right in his way, but wrong in taking his parcel to be the whole truth.

"Not one of these sectarians observed the fact that the elephant was perfectly white, and a marvel to see, for all of them were purblind. Yet I would not say that they were either dishonest or hypocrites. They had investigated the truth to the best of their ability.

"The master of the elephant is the Tathagata, the Enlightened One, the Buddha. He

has brought the white elephant, symbolizing strength and wisdom and devotion, into the land of the blind; and he who listens to the Tathagata will understand all the schools, and all the sects, and all the factions that are in possession of parcels of the truth. His doctrine is all-comprehensive, and he who takes refuge in Him will cease to bicker and to contend and to quarrel."

— *Translated by Paul Carus.*

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